

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8385
INFO AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY RABAT
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GERMANY

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CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E. O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PEPR, AG, FR
SUBJ: ALGERIAN-FRENCH RELATIONS ON UPSWING

1. FRENCH EMBASSY AND ALGERIAN CONTACTS HAVE COMMENTED ON RECENT IMPROVEMENT IN TONE OF ALGERIAN-FRENCH RELATIONS. BOUMEDIENE'S WARM MESSAGE OF CONGRATULATIONS TO BARRE AND LATTER'S CORDIAL RESPONSE SYMBOLIZES THIS IMPROVEMENT. EXCHANGE BETWEEN FONMINS BOUTEFLIKA AND GUIRINGAND EQUALLY FRIENDLY. ON APRIL 2, COMMUNIQUE ISSUED BY ALGERIAN COUNCIL OF MINISTERS TOOK NOTE OF IMPORTANCE OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES AND ADDED THAT GOA WOULD VIEW COOPERATION POSITIVELY. POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC RELATIONS, COMMUNIQUE NOTED, WERE COMPLEMENTARY. FINALLY, PRESS ATTACKS ON FRENCH, IF NOT ENDED, HAVE BEEN REDUCED IN BOTH QUANTITY AND INTENSITY.

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2. FRENCH ALSO IMPRESSED BY WARM RECEPTION ALGERIANS HAVE GIVEN FRENCH EMISSARIES RECENTLY. GISCARD'S BROTHER, OLIVER, HAS VISITED ALGERIA TWICE, ONCE AT LNG-1 DEDICATION AND A SECOND TIME MORE RECENTLY. ON BOTH OCCASIONS, HE HAS HAD CORDIAL EXCHANGE WITH BOUMEDIENE.

3. ALSO, DELEGATION FROM RHONE-ALPS CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE, LED BY PAUL BERLIET, WHICH VISITED HERE IN LATE MARCH RECEIVED RED CARPET TREATMENT AND INDICATIONS OF ALGERIAN INTEREST IN REVIVING COMMERCIAL EXCHANGES WITH FRANCE. FIVE CABINET MINISTERS ATTENDED FRENCH AMBASSADOR'S RECEPTION FOR DELEGATION, A RECENT RECORD. ALGERIANS SHOWED GREAT INTEREST IN PARTICIPATION BY FRENCH PRIVATE CONSTRUCTION FIRMS IN GOA'S AMBITIOUS HOUSING CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM.

4. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH ALGERIAN-FRENCH DIFFERENCES, PARTICULARLY IN SAHARA, REMAIN AS GREAT AS EVER, BOTH SIDES SEEM ANXIOUS TO KEEP THESE PROBLEMS OUT OF OTHER ASPECTS OF THEIR RELATIONS TO MAXIMUM EXTENT POSSIBLE. OBSTACLES TO NORMALIZATION OF ALGERIAN-FRENCH RELATIONS APPEAR FROM THIS VANTAGE POINT. NEVERTHELESS, ALGERIANS SEEM UNABLE TO LIVE WITHOUT FRENCH AND WILL PROBABLY DO THEIR BEST TO PATCH THINGS UP UNTIL NEXT CRISIS OCCURS.

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